

THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN INSTITUTE

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June 3, 1994

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Re: CC Docket No. 92-166
Amendment of the Commission's Rules
to Establish Rules and Policies
Pertaining to a Mobile Satellite
Service in the
1610-1626.5/2483.5-2500 MHz
Frequency Bands

Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Secretary,

This letter is to urge the Federal Communications Commission to adopt rules that will license satellite systems to provide voice and data mobile satellite service (MSS) in the 1610-1626.5/2483.5-2500 MHz band of the electromagnetic spectrum.

The African-American Institute (AAI) is a non-profit organization, headquartered in New York, NY. AAI was founded in 1953 and is the largest and oldest U.S. organization devoted to Africa. The primary objective of AAI is to foster development in Africa and create strong relations between the U.S. and Africa. Therefore, in 1989, AAI launched the Trade and Investment Program (TIP) which seeks to educate the U.S. private sector on the economic opportunities available in Africa. This has involved the creation of a "Business Lunch Series", which features topics and speakers that are of the highest priority to Africa, such as the upcoming luncheon with President Museveni of Uganda; A telecommunications program that hosted two managers from Post and Telecommunications of Zimbabwe and Namibia giving them exposure to American Corporate telecommunications practices.

The new MSS service using low earth orbit satellite systems that the Commission seeks to license offers many beneficial capabilities for U.S. business and international travelers who seek to increase their market opportunities in developing countries through improved communications capabilities.

First, in today's competitive global business environment, tools that permit businesses to be more responsive to their own organization's operations and those of their customers

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AAI works to further African development and to strengthen African-American understanding

have become indispensable. Expanding cellular-like convenience to other parts of the globe for on demand calling, wherever a traveler may be, will be especially helpful. Low earth orbit satellites enable truly portable hand held voice communication regardless of the presence of an adequate telecommunications infrastructure.

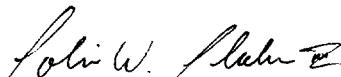
Second, the ability to originate calls to travellers who are moving frequently or are visiting remote locations is important to ensuring responsive communication. A single phone number that will enable mobile staff to be contacted regardless of their location is quite appealing. This is a feature of the hand held phone that is being developed by Motorola for its IRIDIUM System.

Third, worldwide coverage requirements are becoming increasingly critical as business operations become more geographically dispersed. Low earth orbit satellites that have one hundred percent global coverage will completely and responsively satisfy the growing global needs of U.S. businesses, and will offer significant opportunities to businesses in Africa and elsewhere in the developing world to increase their contacts and trade both within the region and overseas.

Finally, the Low Earth Orbit satellite system is economically beneficial to those African companies with which we are involved. It will facilitate better communication within the countries, regions and the continent, thereby leading to increased opportunities for profitable joint ventures between U.S. and African businesses and to improved trade and economic growth in Africa and here in the U.S. It will also enable an avenue of communication to be established to give support during emergency situations.

We urge the Commission to favorably consider the beneficial impact of the ubiquitous, on demand communications capability via hand held phones that low earth orbit satellite systems will make a reality. The spirited competition that has developed among the applicants should bring affordable and comprehensive service to the marketplace. In general, we envision hand held mobile satellite communications will simplify many business tasks, expedite responsiveness, and enhance competitiveness.

Sincerely,



Colin Clarke
Deputy Director
Trade and Investment
The African American Institute

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